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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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Daniel Gudmunson

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12/23/2005

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CANADA

EXAMINER

MEONSKE, TONIA L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2181

DATE MAILED: 12/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/986,262	GUDMUNSON ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Tonia L. Meonske	2181	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 October 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-17 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 and 18-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-11 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arvind et al., Executing a Program on the MIT Tagged-Token Dataflow Architecture, 1990, IEEE, pages 300-318 (herein after "Arvind"), in view of Hennessy and Paterson, Computer Architecture A Quantative Approach, 1996, Morgan Kaufmann Publishers, Inc., Second Edition, pages 252-253 (herein after "Hennessy").
3. Referring to claim 1, Arvind have taught a method for data-driven synchronous parallel processing of a stream of data packets by multiple data processing units working in parallel, comprising the steps of:
 - a. distributing at least one instruction for data processing to one data processing unit of the multiple data processing units (page 303, firing an instruction);
 - b. storing the instruction in an execution instructions memory (Page 314, program memory);
 - c. sending from the one data processing unit a data request for at least one data packet corresponding to the instruction, required to execute the instruction (page 306, "read token" or "write token");

Art Unit: 2181

- d. storing a record of the at least one data packet requested (page 306, waiting or deferred read request);
 - e. associating with the at least one data packet an address of the one data processing unit (pages 306, and 314-315, Section C. entitled "Multiprocessor Operation");
 - f. associating with the each data packet sent out a data token showing the readiness of the packet for further processing (Page 306, present, waiting, or deferred);
 - g. when the at least one data packet is received by the processing unit, associating the data packet with the corresponding instruction and distributing the data packet to the one data processing unit (page 306); and
 - h. processing the data according to the corresponding instruction (page 314, After the match occurs, the instruction is executed using the data.).
4. Arvind has not specifically taught "distributing at least one instruction for data processing to one data processing unit of the multiple data processing units, before the data processing unit is available to process the instruction". However reservation stations, as taught by Hennessy, are well known in the art to buffer instructions waiting to execute and buffer required operands and data as they become available (Hennessy, pages 252- 253), for the desirable purpose of executing the instructions as soon as all of the operands required for execution become available. This eliminates the need to retrieve the instructions and operands from registers at the time of execution, which speeds up instruction execution time. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the method of Arvind distribute at least one instruction for data processing to one data processing unit of the multiple data processing units, before the data processing unit is available to process the instruction, as

Art Unit: 2181

taught by Hennessy, for the desirable purpose of speeding up execution time by immediately executing instructions once all of the operands are available.

5. Referring to claim 2, Arvind and Hennessy have taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and wherein instructions are distributed to the multiple data processing units consecutively (Arvind, page 314, left hand column, Tokens enter the units in sequence; Hennessy, pages 252- 253).

6. Referring to claim 3, Arvind and Hennessy have taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and wherein instructions are distributed to the multiple data processing units concurrently (Arvind, page 303, left hand column, 5th paragraph).

7. Referring to claim 4, Arvind has taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and including, after step f., the step of putting the requested data packets into an internal data buffer in a data processing unit (Arvind, Page 314, WM).

8. Referring to claim 5, Arvind has taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and including, after step g., the step of erasing the record of the data request corresponding to the data packet (Page 314, When a match occurs a token is extracted.).

9. Referring to claim 6, Arvind has taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and including, during step g., the step of sending to the corresponding instruction in the execution instructions memory an indication that the at least one data packet has been received by the processing unit and is available for processing (page 314).

10. Referring to claim 7, Arvind has taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and including, during step e., the step of associating with the data packets an address of its sender and, during the step g, associating the data packet with the corresponding instruction according

Art Unit: 2181

to the address of the data packet sender (Page 314, Destination addresses are routed back to the top of the processing element.).

11. Referring to claim 8, Arvind has taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and including, during the step g, associating the data packet with the corresponding instruction according to the order of the data packet received (page 314, The data packets are associated as soon as they are received.).

12. Referring to claim 9, Arvind has taught the method of claim 4, as described above, and including the step of retrieving each data packet from the internal data buffer to be processed according to the corresponding instruction (Page 314, Tokens for the corresponding instruction are retrieved from the WM.).

13. Referring to claim 10, Arvind has taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and wherein an output of the processing step is sent to another data processing unit or out of the processor, or both (page 314, both).

14. Referring to claim 11, Arvind has taught the method of claim 1, as described above, and wherein processing occurs in real-time (Page 307, ID language is deterministic.).

15. Claim 28 does not recite limitations above the claimed invention set forth in claim 1 and is therefore rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claim 1 above.

16. Claims 18-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arvind et al., Executing a Program on the MIT Tagged-Token Dataflow Architecture, 1990, IEEE, pages 300-318 (herein after "Arvind").

Art Unit: 2181

17. Referring to claim 18, Arvind has taught an apparatus for substantially non-stalling data-driven synchronous parallel processing of data packets including a digital data processor, further comprising:

- a. an interface for receiving instructions and digital data from at least one external device and sending instructions or digital data or both to at least one external device (Page 314, Output tokens to network for another PE, page 303, tokens are tagged with instructions);
- b. an instruction path contained inside the processor (Page 313-314, Instruction Fetch Unit uses an instruction path.);
- c. a data path contained inside the processor; a plurality of data processing units organized for parallel processing of the data (Page 314, Paths to and from the WM.); and
- d. a distributing unit organized for distributing one or more instructions at a time to the data processing units (Page 313-314, Figure 18, Instruction Fetch Unit).

18. Arvind has not taught that the data path is separate from the instruction path. However, making something separate is not a patentable difference (In Re Dulberg, 289 F.2d 522, 523, 129 USPQ 348, 349 (CCPA 1961)). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the data path of Arvind, be separate from the instruction path, as it has been held that making something separable is not a patentable difference.

19. Claim 19 does not recite limitations above the claimed invention set forth in claim 2 and is therefore rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claim 2 above.

Art Unit: 2181

20. Claim 20 does not recite limitations above the claimed invention set forth in claim 3 and is therefore rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claim 3 above.

21. Referring to claim 21, Arvind has taught the apparatus of claim 18 wherein each data processing unit comprises

- a. a storage for instructions (Page 314, right hand column, 1st paragraph, program memory);
- b. a storage for records of outstanding data requests (Page 314, WM);
- c. a storage for receiving requested data packets (Page 314, WM); and
- d. a computation module for processing the requested data packets in accordance with at least one associated instruction (Page 314, Instruction Fetch Unit, ALU).

22. Referring to claim 22, Arvind has taught the apparatus of claim 21, as described above, and comprising control logic for controlling instruction and data flows through the processor (Figure 18, "Control").

23. Referring to claim 23, Arvind has taught the apparatus of claim 18, as described above, and wherein the digital data processor comprises a general-purpose microprocessor (abstract).

24. Referring to claim 24, Arvind has taught the apparatus of claim 18, as described above, and wherein the digital data processor comprises a graphics processor (Page 301).

25. Referring to claim 25, Arvind has taught the apparatus of claim 18, as described above, and wherein the digital data processor comprises a digital signal processor (abstract, page 301).

26. Referring to claim 26, Arvind has taught the apparatus of claim 21, as described above, and wherein the computational module operates using vector values (Page 301).

Art Unit: 2181

27. Referring to claim 27, Arvind has taught the apparatus of claim 21, as described above, and wherein the computational module operates using scalar values (Page 301, Where the vector size is 1.).

Response to Arguments

28. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-11 and 18-28 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

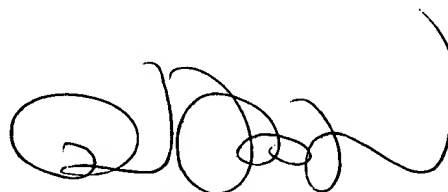
29. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tonia L. Meonske whose telephone number is (571) 272-4170.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, with every other Friday off.

30. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dov Popovici can be reached on (571) 272-4083. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

31. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

tlm


DOV POPOVICI
SENIOR PATENT EXAMINER
ART UNIT 2181